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A NATIVE FOOD PLANT FOR THE BUTTERFLY *DEUDORIX EPIJARBAS* (LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE)

By M. S. Moulds
14 Chisholm Street, Greenwich, N.S.W., 2065.

Two subspecies of *Deudorix epijarbas* have been described from Australia *D. e. diovis* Hewitson which ranges from Mackay to Gosford and *D. e. did* Waterhouse found from Cape York to Tully. The larvae of the former have bee recorded feeding within the seed capsules (fruit) of Tulipwood, *Harpull pendula* (Common and Waterhouse, 1972) and *Macadamia* nuts (Ironside, 197 Exotic subspecies have been found feeding in the fruit of *Cinnarus ritchi Aesculus indicus* and Pomegranate, *Punica granatum.* No food plant h previously been recorded for the north Queensland subspecies *D. e. dido.*

In May 1974, at Iron Range, Cape York Peninsula, Mr J. W. C. d'Ap (pers. commun.) found several pupal exuviae of a lycaenid butterfly o unknown identity inside dried and eaten out seed capsules of the palm *Caryo rumphiana* Mart. (Pl. I). In September 1974, also at Iron Range, Mr & Mrs A Walford-Huggins, my wife and I found many lycaenid pupal exuviae in simil *rumphiana* fruit, and following a more extensive search located two unemerg pupae. These emerged on 20th and 25th Sep. 1974, both as male *D. e. did*

Never more than one pupa was found in any one *rumphiana* fruit and number of attacked fruit were empty suggesting that the larva, having devour the entire contents and requiring further food, had moved on to a new fru Each attacked fruit was secured to its stalk by silken threads which the la had apparently spun to prevent its home falling from the tree as the fruit di Common and Waterhouse (1972) and Ironside (1973) give life history not for *D. e. diovis.*

Caryota rumphiana grows only in rain forest and is often difficult to fi as both the trunk and leaves blend well with surrounding vegetation. Howev this palm is easily distinguished from other Australian palms by its very distin leaf shape: it is the only endemic species with bipinnate leaves. Large specime may grow to a height of 20 metres or more.

As this palm does not grow more than a little south of Iron Ra *D. e. dido* must attack other plants between Cooktown and Tully. Common a Waterhouse (1972) suggest that in north-eastern Australia larvae of this a related species should be sought in the fruits of any plant with large seeds. may well be rewarding therefore, for those persons with the opportunity, examine native fruits for possible attack by this interesting butterfly.

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References

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PLATE I

A relatively young specimen (height approximately 8 m) of the palm *Caryota rumphiana* growing in dense rain forest on the slopes of Mt. Lamond, Iron Range, Cape York Peninsula.